

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR UR SV NO US

SUBJ: NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER REQUESTS US VIEWS ON SOVIET
INTERESTS IN NORTH NORWAY AND VICINITY

1. DURING DCM'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND FEBRUARY 15 ON MATTER REPORTED SEPARATELY, DISCUSSION TURNED TO PREPARATIONS FOR PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE USSR IN MID-MARCH. FRYDENLUND SAID THAT HE WOULD BE FOCUSING IN NEXT FORTNIGHT ON THE QUESTION OF NORWAY'S POLICY TOWARD THE USSR, NOTABLY IN THE BARENTS SEA AND ARCTIC AREA. HE COMMENTED THAT, UNTIL NOW, NORWAY DID NOT REALLY HAVE A POLICY TOWARD THE USSR, IMPLYING THAT HE FELT HE MUST NOW BE ITS ARCHITECT.

2. FRYDENLUND NOTED THAT THE USSR, WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY, REFERS TO ITS SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE NORTH, IN TALKING WITH NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS. FORMIN THEN ASKED WHETHER USG MIGHT NOT HAVE PREPARED DOME STUDY WHICH WOULD BE OF ASSISTANCE TO HIM IN DISTINGUISHING LEGITIMATE SOVIET SECURITY INTERESTS IN NORTH NORWAY FROM PROPOSALS WHICH NORWAY SHOULD REJECT AS ARTIFICIAL AND NOT IN ITS INTEREST. HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS EMBASSY MIGHT WISH TO MAKE ON THE UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS AND PROBLEM OF NEGOTIATING WITH THE RUSSIANS.

3. COMMENT: WE MUST ASSUME THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HAS ALREADY SOME FAIRLY FIRM IDEAS OF HIS OWN, BUT IS ANXIOUS TO FACTOR AS MANY CONSIDERATIONS AS POSSIBLE INTO THIS VITAL POLICY FORMULATION
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AND TO BENEFIT FROM OUR GREATER EXPERIENCE OF DEALING WITH USSR AND OUR GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF SOVIET SECURITY INPRACTICES. HE ALSO DOUBTLESS HOPES, THROUGH APPEARING TO INVOLVE US IN THE NORWEGIAN POLICY-MAKING PROCESS, TO REASSURE US IN CONNECTION WITH

THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT THAT OUR INTERESTS WILL BE PROTECTED.
IT HAS APPEARED TO US THAT THE US ALSO HAS NOT HAD OCCASION OF LATE
TO CONSIDER A SPECIFIC POLICY RELATED TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC/
SVALBARD/BARENTS SEA AREA. I BELIEVE FRYDENLUND HAS PROVIDED US
WITH AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY, WHICH WE SHOULD NOT MISS, TO ASSIST
NORWAY TO FORMULATE ITS POLICY TOWARD THE USSR ALONG LINES WHICH
PROTECT VITAL AMERICAN SECURITY AND OTHER INTERESTS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: I ACCORDINGLY HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT CAN
PROVIDE ME WITHIN NEXT FORTNIGHT WITH (A) USG ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET
MILITARY AND SECURITY IMPERATIVES IN THE NORTH; (B) A STATEMENT
OF WHAT OUR INTERESTS ARE IN THE AREA; AND (C) AN INDICATION OF
WHAT OUR POSITION IS ON THE QUESTION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF
OFF SVALBARD AND OUR RIGHTS OF EXPLOITATION.
BYRNE

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